

# CREATIVE COMPOSTING TEACHER'S PACK

Key Stage 1

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# Teacher's Notes

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### About the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP)

WRAP (the Waste & Resources Action Programme) is a major UK programme established to promote resource efficiency. Its particular focus is on creating stable and efficient markets for recycled materials and products and removing the barriers to waste minimisation, re-use and recycling. A not-for-profit company in the private sector, WRAP is backed by substantial Government funding from Defra and the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Details of all WRAP's activities are available at [www.wrap.org.uk](http://www.wrap.org.uk)

### About this Pack

This pack is designed for use with children aged four to six. It contains pupils' resource and activity cards and teachers' work cards introducing you to the world of composting. Where possible the activities have been designed to link back to aspects of the National Curriculum including Geography, English and Maths, whilst at the same time increasing general awareness of environmental issues. The pack fits particularly well with the Key Stage One Science syllabus, which states: Scientific studies should be used to teach children about experimental and investigative methods. They need to be able to:

- plan experimental work
- obtain evidence, and to consider it.

Work on life and living processes should be related to pupils' knowledge of plants and animals.

It should include knowledge of:

- basic life processes
- humans as organisms, and green plants as organisms
- variation and classification
- living things in their environment.

Work on materials and their properties should include:

- grouping materials
- how and when materials change state.

## GETTING STARTED

### What is compost?

Compost is an organic material derived from decomposed kitchen scraps and garden waste. It has a soil-like, often spongy texture and is rich in nutrients.

Items of rubbish that rot are organic materials. They are biodegradable.

Composting is a natural recycling process whereby tiny micro-organisms and minibeasts feed off decomposing kitchen and garden scraps. This helps to break down the organic matter. After six to nine months the rubbish will have turned into a nutrient rich, brown compost, ready for use on plants and soil.

You can compost almost anything that was once alive apart from cooked food, meat and fish and waste of animal origin. These items can attract pests and vermin like flies and rats.

# Teacher's Notes

## Why should we compost?

By composting at home and at school, we reduce the organic waste that is sent to landfill sites. At landfill sites all the rubbish is dumped together, organic waste is left to rot without air (anaerobic decomposition) and forms the gas ammonia. Ammonia is poisonous to fish and spoils drinking water. Anaerobically rotting organic waste also produces methane – a powerful greenhouse gas that is contributing towards climate change. The compost you make is great for your garden and works as a feed and soil conditioner, improving soil quality and encouraging your plants to grow and stay healthy.

## COMPOSTING GLOSSARY

- Compost** The material that is formed when organic material rots.
- Organic Matter** Plants, fruits and vegetables – living things (meat and fish should be avoided when making compost because they attract flies and vermin and tend to putrify).
- Biodegradable** Materials that are able to rot.
- Decompose** To rot.
- Greenhouse Gas** Some greenhouse gases occur naturally in the atmosphere, others result from human activities. Naturally occurring greenhouse gases include water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and ozone. Human activity can add to the levels of these natural gases, trapping heat within the earth's atmosphere, leading to global warming.

## Problems at landfill sites include:

- Landfill gas** A mixture of gases including methane and carbon dioxide that have to be captured and burnt off at landfill sites. In many modern sites the burning of gas is used to make electricity or to generate heat.
- Leachate** The liquid wastes generated at landfill sites, which also have to be captured and treated before being returned to the watercourse.

## GENERAL GUIDANCE – using this pack

For each session, pupils will need a copy of the activity card and its corresponding resource cards. Activities that require more than one resource are indicated in the guidance notes. Activity cards can be printed off and photocopied for pupils to write on.

## Preparation

Before starting the project, ask the children to think about the rubbish they generate each day. They could look in their lunch boxes at the wrappers and fruit peel that they will be throwing away or look in the classroom waste paper basket. Hand round a small sample of compost for the children to touch and smell and explain that compost can be made from waste materials. Explain that by composting much of the rubbish they throw in the bin, it could be transformed into compost and be used to grow plants and flowers.

Read through and discuss **Resource Card 1** as a class.

Resource Card 1 introduces the class to 'Compost Creatures'. Read the card out as a class ensuring that students understand which materials are suitable for the compost bin and which are not.

# Teacher's Notes

Distribute the corresponding **Activity Card 1** and ask students to work independently to identify composting creatures and materials suitable for composting.

**Resource Card 2** explains the basic composting procedures in chronological order. In order to complete **Activity Card 2** ask the students to work independently to answer the questions about the mistakes made by Silly Sally in the story.

**Resource Card 3** explains in simple terms the different parts of the plant and their individual functions. Ask the class to feed back on their experiences of growing plants at home. Are they aware that plants should be watered? Where do they think plants should be kept (in a light or sunny spot)? Talk through the plant life-cycle, from planting to decomposition and use in the compost bin. The **Activity Card 3** asks students to name different parts of the plant and demonstrate an understanding of their individual importance.

**Activity Card 4** provides an opportunity for pupils to think about their own gardens, colouring in a garden and various composting creatures.

**Activity Card 5** encourages pupils to use their observation skills to spot differences in garden pictures.

**Activity card 6** has been designed to demonstrate to pupils the use of compost as a planting material and how it can help promote plant growth. The experiment will take approximately four weeks to complete.

This activity provides a range of options to explore with your class:

- Graph the germination rate and plant growth over the 6 weeks for the different seed trays.
- Draw a graph and compare average germination rates for each tray or the average plant growth for each tray.
- Determine the overall health of the plants in each tray.
- Based on the experiment you can ascertain the best growing medium for plant germination, for plant growth and for overall plant health.

Anticipated outcomes

Seeds sown in the : -

- sand should germinate, however, once the seeds run out of their food store there will be poor growth.
- soil may not germinate as well due to the soil being more compacted and there being less air.
- garden compost will germinate well and growth after could be vigorous which could be too soft and sappy in the long term.
- mix of soil and compost will germinate and should then produce good sturdy plant growth.

**The Adventures of Wonky and Ugg** is provided as a story for reading to your class and is ideal to discuss once some of your activities have been completed.

## USEFUL WEBSITES

Below you will find a list of useful websites that look at the issues of waste management, recycling and composting. If you wish to continue working on compost related projects they may offer useful sources of additional information.

### General waste information

**Recycle Now** - [www.recyclenowpartners.co.uk](http://www.recyclenowpartners.co.uk)

Helping local authorities, retailers and publishers promote recycle now to the public. Includes brand guidelines, fun facts, recycling statistics and information.

**Ollie Recycles** - [www.ollierecycles.com/uk](http://www.ollierecycles.com/uk)

A child-friendly website, full of games, quizzes, puzzles and information. Ollie and his friends show you around and teach you more about the 3Rs - reduce, reuse and recycle.

**US Environmental Protection Agency** - [www.epa.gov/kids/garbage.htm](http://www.epa.gov/kids/garbage.htm)

Waste education resources from the US Environmental Protection Agency, including Recycle City, in which you explore how an imaginary town has restored itself from Dumptown to Recycle City.

**Global Action Plan** - [www.globalactionplan.org.uk](http://www.globalactionplan.org.uk)

Action at School is an environmental programme that helps the whole school community to go green and save money. Contains a good kids' area and a questionnaire to find out how green you are.

**The Recycling Consortium** - [www.recyclingconsortium.org.uk](http://www.recyclingconsortium.org.uk)

This site, from the Bristol based Recycling Consortium, contains some great games that will help you to learn about reducing, reusing and recycling waste.

**Environment Agency** - [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

The kids' section of this site contains games, movies and animations on the themes of waste, plastics and the 3Rs. Put the postcode of your home or school into 'What's in your Backyard?' to locate information about landfill sites, pollution, and other environmental features in your local area. Also gives useful background information on a whole range of waste related topics.

**Global Footprints** - [www.globalfootprints.org](http://www.globalfootprints.org)

An introduction to the concept of global footprints. The children's part of the site includes games, facts, poems, stories, quizzes, and web links on the subject of sustainability. For teachers there is background information and numeracy and literacy based classroom activities.

**Green Choices** - [www.greenchoices.org](http://www.greenchoices.org)

This site provides a useful material by material guide to recycling as well as listing environmental websites for teachers, school managers and children of different ages.

### Composting

**Schools Organic Network** - [www.hdra.org.uk/schools\\_organic\\_network](http://www.hdra.org.uk/schools_organic_network)

The Learning Zone on this site contains information on making compost and how to build an organic garden in which to use this. There is also a Fun Zone with online quizzes and word searches.

**The Microbe Zoo** - [www.commtechlab.msu.edu/sites/dlc-me/zoo/](http://www.commtechlab.msu.edu/sites/dlc-me/zoo/)

Discover the many worlds of hidden microbes.

**The Adventures of Herman the Worm** - [www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/worms](http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/worms)

An American site all about Squirmin' Herman the worm!

**Growing Schools Programme** - [www.schoolsgarden.org.uk](http://www.schoolsgarden.org.uk)

Advice on how to set up a school garden, including information on composting and wormeries.

**Mansfield Middle School Composting Programme** - [www.mansfieldct.org/Schools/MMS/compost](http://www.mansfieldct.org/Schools/MMS/compost)

A website created by an American school that has created a school-wide composting system.

Could your school do something similar?

**Environ** - [www.littlerotters.org.uk](http://www.littlerotters.org.uk)

Information and advice on encouraging schools to get composting.

## Buy recycled

**UK Recycled Products Guide** - [www.recycledproducts.org.uk](http://www.recycledproducts.org.uk)

WRAP's online guide to products made from recycled materials. The comprehensive and regularly updated database catalogues over 930 items made from recycled materials, including stationary and furniture of use to schools.

## What your school can do about waste

**Cardboard School** - [www.cardboardschool.co.uk](http://www.cardboardschool.co.uk)

A fascinating website about the design and construction of a 15 by 6 metre school building made from cardboard, which in itself has been made from recycled paper.

**Eco Schools** - [www.eco-schools.org.uk](http://www.eco-schools.org.uk)

Information on the Eco Schools programme which aims to get everyone in the school community involved in making the school environment better.

**Greening Britain's Schools** - [www.greening.org.uk](http://www.greening.org.uk)

Results of a study into the environmental impact of schools. Send for a copy or download the report from the website.

**Think Leadership** - [www.thinkleadership.org.uk](http://www.thinkleadership.org.uk)

You can use this site to carry out an environmental assessment of your school or to access information and links to sites about environmental sustainability.

**Wastebusters** - [www.wastebusters.co.uk](http://www.wastebusters.co.uk)

This site, which draws on 10 years experience of the Wastebusters Consultancy, provides loads of useful information about environmental efficiency in the business environment, much of which could be applied to schools, especially school offices.

## COMPOSTING AND THE CURRICULUM

Learning about home composting within the context of recycling and waste management can be used to deliver many parts of the National Curriculum (NC). Here are some examples for pupils working at Key Stage 1 or 2.

### Science

Learn about the role of micro-organisms in the breakdown of waste. e.g. through work on composting. NC link: KS 2/Sc2/5f.

Investigate materials and their properties by grouping and classifying different types of waste materials and considering why they are used for specific purposes e.g. different types of plastic, paper and card. NC links: KS1/Sc3/1c,d & KS2/Sc3/1a.

Use the concepts of non-renewable and renewable resources, reuse and recycling to explore the way in which changes in materials are either reversible or irreversible. NC link: KS2/Sc3/2d & f and QCA unit 6D - Reversible and irreversible changes.

### Geography

Include the issues of waste and litter when asking pupils to express their views about local places. NC link: KS1/1c,5b & QCA unit 8 -Improving the environment.

Consider waste when identifying how people can improve the environment [e.g. by reducing their level of resource use] or damage it [for example, by flytipping and over-reliance on landfill and incineration]. NC link: KS2/5a & QCA unit 21 - How can we improve the area we see from our window?

Use waste as an example when identifying and explaining the different views that people hold about topical geographical issues. NC link: KS2/1d.

### Citizenship & PSHE

Consider how resources can be allocated in different ways and that these economic choices affect individuals, communities and the sustainability of the environment. NC link: KS2/2j & QCA unit 2 – Choices include the establishment of a composting scheme as part of the development of school grounds. QCA unit 6 - Developing our school grounds.

### English & Literacy

Ask pupils to discuss or debate what their responsibilities are in terms of creating and dealing with waste, either at school or at home. Whilst doing so, they should learn to talk effectively as members of a group, qualifying or justifying what they think after listening to others' questions or accounts and dealing politely with opposing points of view. NC link: KS2/En1/3c, d.

### Maths & Numeracy

Measure the volume and weight of waste produced by the school in a day and work out from this the amount that would be produced in a year. NC links: KS2/Ma2/1a, 4a & Ma3/4a, b. Draw graphs of the amount of waste produced in different parts of the school. NC link: KS2/Ma4/1a, c & 2c, f.

### Design & Technology

Challenge pupils to make things using largely or only waste materials. e.g. for the KS1 QCA unit: - Homes. Consider the issue of waste when investigating and describing a range of packaging. When designing and constructing packaging, seek to minimise the amount of waste produced or seek to use materials that are reusable or recyclable. NC link: KS2/3c & QCA unit 3A - Packaging.

### ICT

Use the weblinks provided on this site to research and present findings about a particular aspect of waste, for example, the origins and uses of a specific material and how it is dealt with as a waste product. NC link: KS2/1a,b,c.



# Resource Card 1

## COMPOST CREATURES

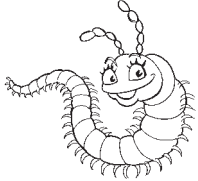


Bertie Beetle

Bertie Beetle, Errol Earwig and Moesha Millipede all live together at the bottom of the compost bin. They like living in the warm, dark, smelly compost and spend their days talking, eating and sleeping.

Bertie, Errol and Moesha's compost bin is at the bottom of Gardener Gary's garden. Every day Gardener Gary visits the compost bin and adds lots of their favourite foods to the top of the bin.

Bertie Beetle's favourite foods are vegetable peelings, fruit scraps, dead plants and grass cuttings. They are called The Greens.

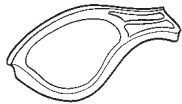


Errol Earwig's favourite foods are scrunched up paper, cardboard, straw, and old egg boxes. They are called The Browns.

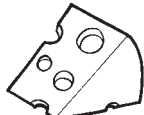
Moesha Millipede is very greedy, she'll eat anything!

Moesha Millipede

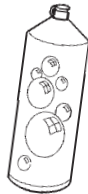
Gardener Gary knows there are some foods that our compost creatures think are really yucky, so he never, ever puts them in the compost bin.



Meat



Cheese



Plastic



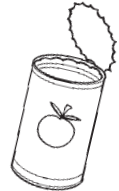
Fish



Glass



Bones



Metal

These are called The No-no's. If Bertie, Errol or Moesha are asked to eat them they shout "No, No!"

## COMPOSTING COUSINS

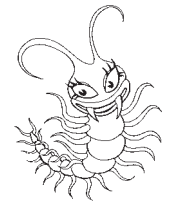
Bertie, Errol and Moesha don't live alone; they share their compost bin with their composting cousins.



Shakira Slug

Here is Shakira Slug, she loves to feast on vegetable scraps, and rotting fruit – MMmmm!

Cita Centipede is quick off the mark – she has a 'hundred' legs, and is busy looking for insects and spiders to eat.



Cita Centipede

Tiny Micky Microbe is so small you can only see him with a microscope. He feeds off the waste inside the compost bin and makes it rot down and turn into compost.



Mickey Microbe

And finally, Wayne the Worm who can eat about half his body weight in food everyday.

Our composting creatures are happy to help you solve your composting questions. Join them on a journey around the garden to see if together you can dig up lots of composting clues.

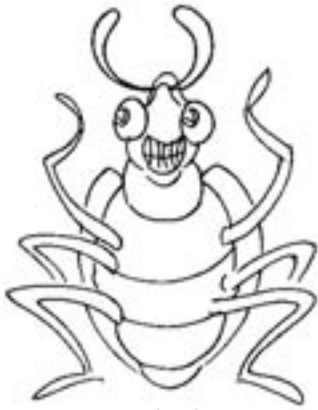


Wayne Worm

# Activity Card 1

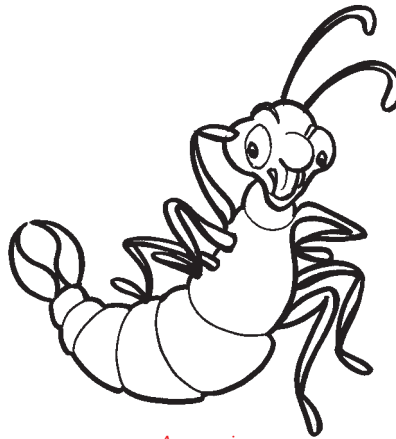
## COMPOST CREATURES – IDENTIFICATION

**Task 1.** Look at these drawings of composting creatures. Can you write the name of each creature under correct picture? Bertie, Errol, Moesha, Gary.



A beetle

My name is.....



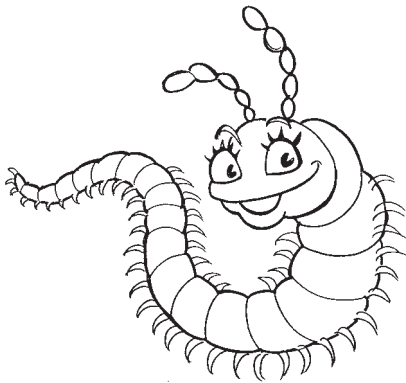
An earwig

My name is.....



A Gardener

My name is.....

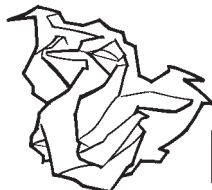
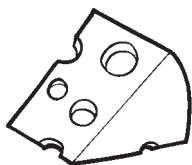
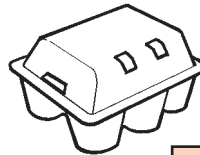
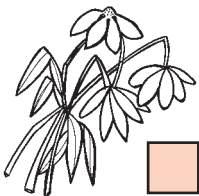


A millipede

My name is.....

## COMPOST CREATURES – IDENTIFICATION

**Task 2.** Look at the pictures below. Put a tick in the box next to our composting creatures' favourite foods and a cross next to the 'No, no's'.



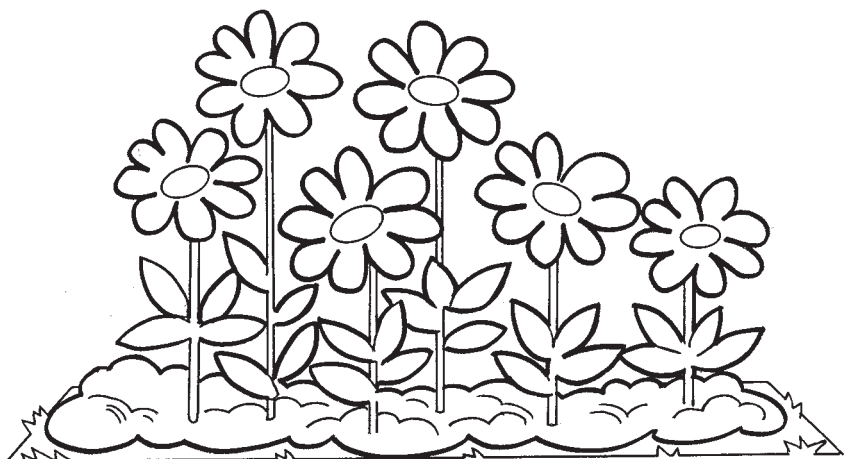
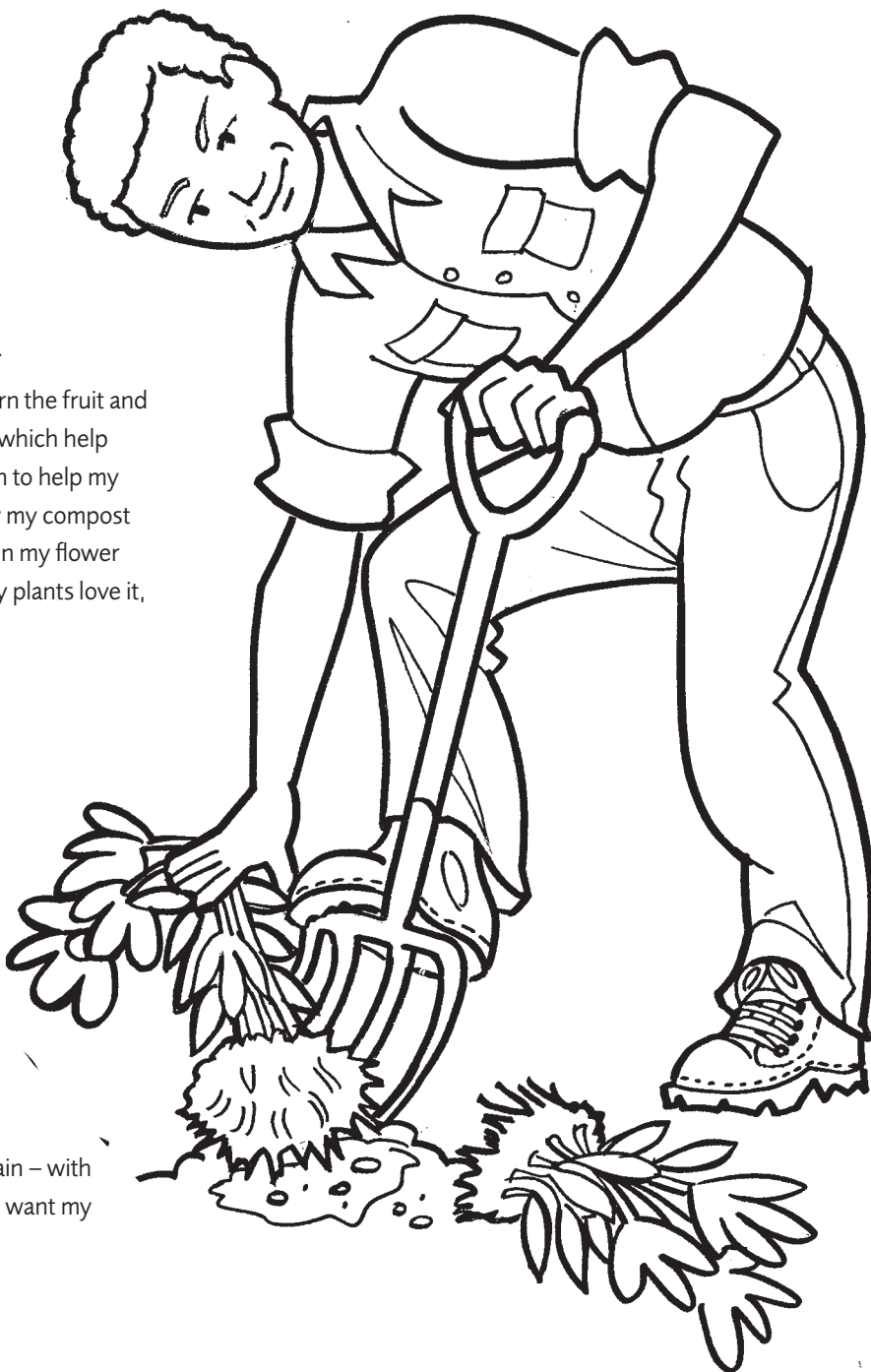
# Resource Card 2

## CREATING COMPOST

Hello, my name is Gary and I'm a gardener. I have a compost bin at the bottom of my garden. Every day I put waste from my kitchen and my garden in the compost bin for my friends, Bertie, Errol and Moesha to eat. They just love eating their browns and greens.

As Bertie, Errol and Moesha eat, they turn the fruit and vegetable scraps into crumbly compost, which help plants grow. I use compost in my garden to help my plants grow. Every nine months I empty my compost bin and put the lovely, brown compost on my flower beds and in my plant pots and tubs – my plants love it, it is their favourite food.

I then start filling up the compost bin again – with lots of fresh browns and greens – I don't want my composting creatures to go hungry!



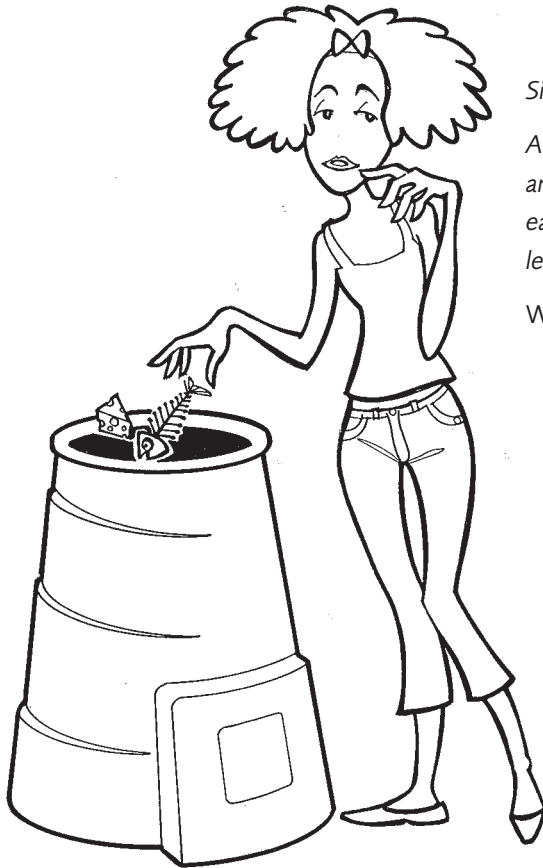
## GARDENER GARY'S GOLDEN RULES

- Only feed browns and greens – never No-no's
- Empty to compost bin after nine months – not before
- Feed the compost to my plants – they love it
- Remember to start filling the compost bin again – or the compost creatures will go hungry

# Activity Card 2

## CREATING COMPOST

**Task 1.** Here is a story Gardener Gary tells his friends to see if they can remember how to look after a compost bin.



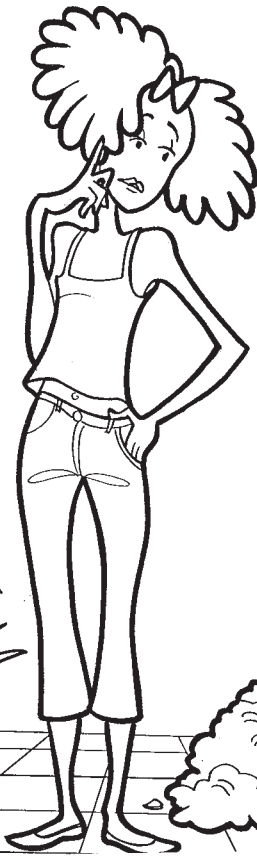
*Silly Sally has a new compost bin at the bottom of her garden.*

*After lunch Silly Sally decides to clear away all the kitchen scraps and put them in the compost bin for Bertie, Errol and Moesha to eat. Along with some fruit scraps and vegetable peelings Sally puts left over cheese and fish in the bin.*

What do you think Silly Sally has done wrong?

*Silly Sally decides to empty her compost on to the patio. She is so busy with her new gardening project that she doesn't add any more greens or browns to the compost bin and leaves it empty..*

What do you think Silly Sally has done wrong?



*Sally wants her plants to be strong and healthy and to have lots of pretty flowers so the next day she empties her compost bin and uses the compost to help her plants to grow.*

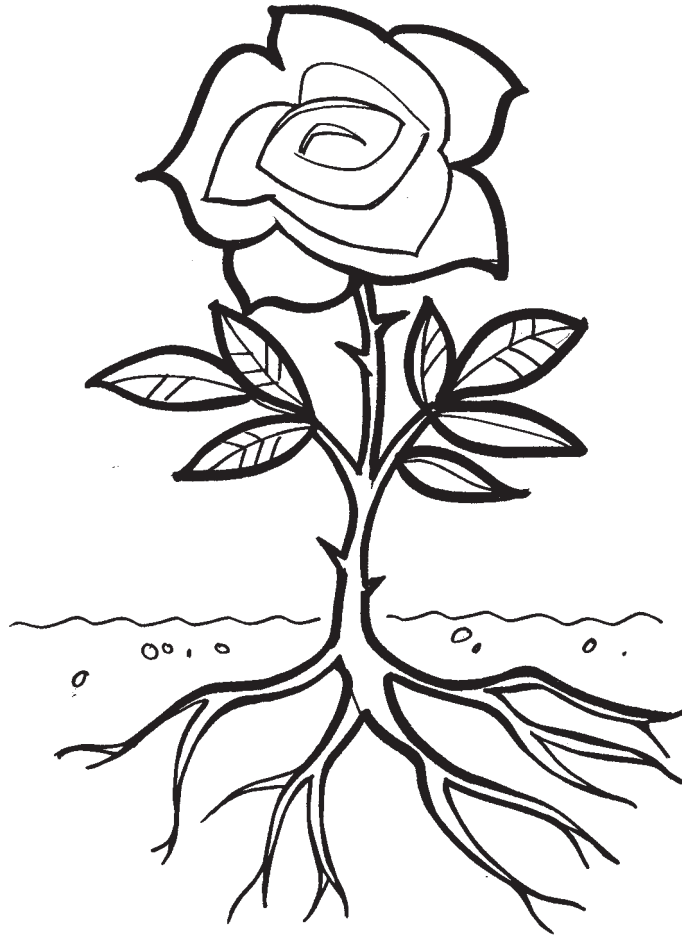
What do you think Silly Sally has done wrong?



# Resource Card 3

## GARY THE GARDENER'S PLANT FACTS

Plants are made up of roots – which live under the soil, a green stalk, green leaves and the flower – which is made up of lots of petals.



Plants need a mixture of good food, water and light to be happy. They get their food through their roots from the soil, and through the leaves from the sunlight. When it rains they can have a drink.

- A plant's roots hold it in the soil and feed it
- Its flower attracts bees and other insects
- Its stalk carries water around the plant
- Its leaves turn sunlight into food

Compost is a favourite food for plants and when it is added to the soil it helps them grow big and strong.

# Activity Card 3

## GARY THE GARDENER'S PLANT FACTS

**Task 1.** Write down the correct parts of this plant using the words in the box.

LEAF

STALK

ROOT

FLOWER

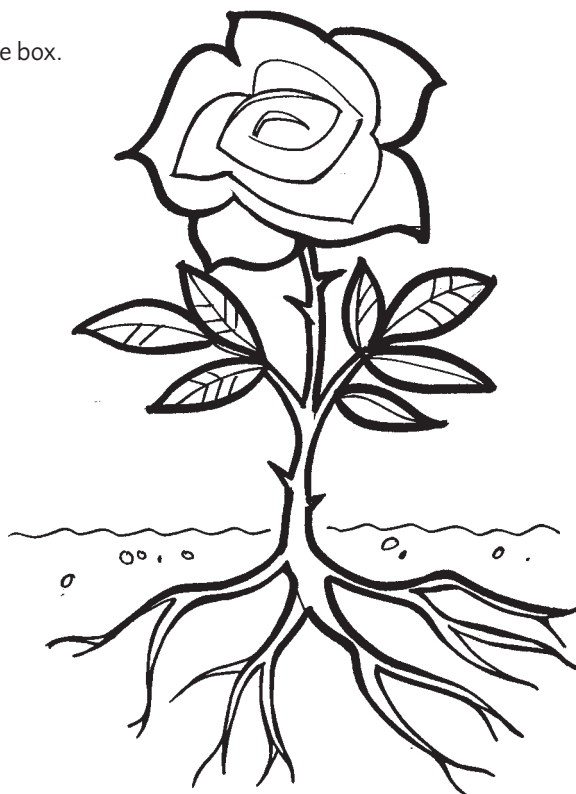
1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Arrows should link across to different parts of the plant



**Task 2.** Match the parts of the plant to the job they do.

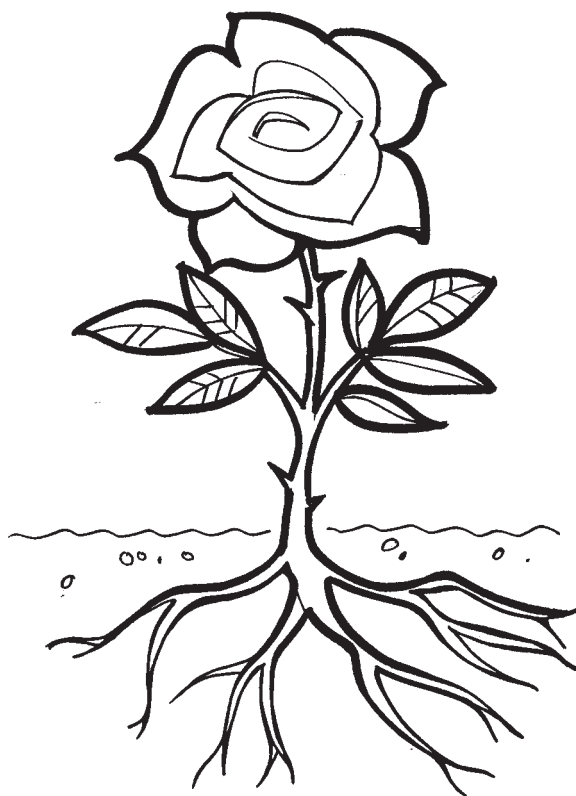
1. These turn sunlight into food

2. This carries water around the plant

3. This attracts insects

4. This holds the plant in the soil and feeds it

Arrows should link across to different parts of the plant



**Task 3.** Now put the part of the flower together with what it does.

The \_\_\_\_\_ carries water around the plant.

The \_\_\_\_\_ attracts bees and other insects.

The \_\_\_\_\_ holds the plant in the soil and feeds it.

The \_\_\_\_\_ turn sunlight into food.

# Activity Card 4

## COMPOST COLOURING

Colour in the picture of a garden below showing how colourful a well-fed garden can be.



My name is \_\_\_\_\_

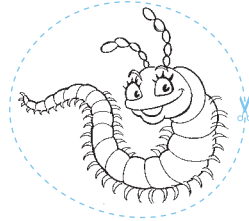
# Activity Card 4

## COMPOST COLOURING

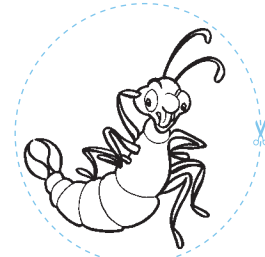
Composting creatures love compost bins and help make great compost. Colour in the composting creatures below, cut them out carefully and stick them on your garden picture.



*Bertie Beetle*



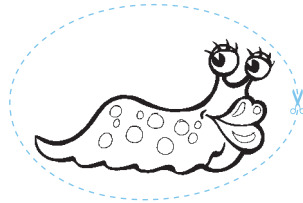
*Moesha Millipede*



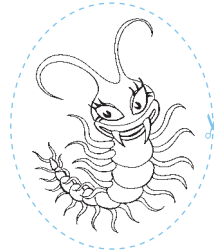
*Errol Earwig*



*Mickey Microbe*



*Shakira Slug*



*Cita Centipede*



*Wayne Worm*



# Activity Card 5

## SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

These two gardens might look the same – but there are ten hidden differences. Can you find them?



My name is \_\_\_\_\_

# Activity Card 6

## THE COMPOST CHALLENGE

Are you ready to take the compost challenge and see whether Gardener Gary is right and compost really does make your plants grow bigger and better?

We are going to see what makes plants grow best. Is it sand? Or soil? Or compost? Or a mixture?

Working with your teacher we are going to take the COMPOST CHALLENGE.

You will need: -

- four seed trays
- sieved garden compost
- garden soil
- sand
- forty (minimum) – sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- ruler

## GETTING STARTED

1. Prepare the four seed trays.
2. Fill the first seed tray with sand and label.
3. Fill the second with garden soil and label.
4. Fill the third with garden compost and label.
5. Fill the fourth with a mixture of half soil and half compost then label all trays.
6. Sow ten seeds, (two rows of five seeds) in each of the four seed trays. Push each seed down with your finger until they are at least two centimetres below the surface then smooth the surface over.
7. Water each tray with the same amount of water and position them all where they will receive the same levels of light and warmth.
8. Water each tray with the same amount of water on Monday, Wednesday and Friday (do not let the trays dry out).
9. Make notes on general plant health. Do the leaves look green or yellow? Are the plants looking long and spindly? How strong are the plants?
10. Continue for a minimum of four weeks – although six weeks would be better.
11. Which seeds have grown the biggest and look the healthiest?

# A story for teachers to read

The following is a story for your class to enjoy. Read and discuss.

## THE ADVENTURES OF WONKY AND UGG\*

### The Trip to the Landfill Site

Wonky the worm and Ugg the slug are the best of friends and live in the garden, where they do everything together. One day, sitting at the bottom of the drive, they watched the dustbin men load the lorry.

"Where do you think that goes?" asks Ugg.

"I don't know, let's climb on board and find out." replies Wonky, the more adventurous of the two.

"Um OK." says Ugg nervously. Wonky and Ugg rush to the lorry and climb up the side. "I don't want to go inside, everything is getting squashed." says Ugg.

"OK – we'll be safe on the side here. But I wonder where we're going?" says Wonky.

About 30 minutes later they arrive at the rubbish dump.

"Look at all that food, we must be in paradise." says Ugg.

"I'm off to eat." he shouts, jumping off the lorry. Wonky looks worried and holds his nose to stop the awful smell.

"It doesn't smell very good here." he shouts to his friend, who is busy munching a banana skin.

"Look, there's so many fruit and vegetable peelings here and they taste lovely! Come and join me." says Ugg.

"I am rather hungry and this food does look good. I think I will have a bite." thinks Wonky to himself.

Wonky starts digging a hole through the food, munching away at the peelings. But after just a few centimetres, he realises something is wrong. "I can't breathe." he cries as he starts to wriggle his way backwards out of the hole.

Ugg sees that his friend is in trouble and rushes over. All he can hear is a muffled "HELP." Ugg does his best to pull Wonky's tail, but he's so full of banana skin it's very difficult to get him out of the hole. After a few hard pulls, Wonky pops back to the surface and lies on the ground, puffing and panting.

"That was terrible," says Wonky. "I couldn't breathe in there, it's too compact and far too hot. We can't stay on the surface because there are too many birds who would

love to eat us." Ugg agrees and they look for a lorry to take them home.

That evening Wonky and Ugg make it back to the garden.

"Remind me never to do that again." says Wonky.

"Too right." replies Ugg. "It was your silly idea after all. I think we need to keep our excitement here in the garden. Even if there isn't all that much food to eat."

"OK" says Wonky, "We'll keep our adventures at home and not climb into the back of any lorries from now on. I'm going to get some sleep. Good night."

"Me too, good night." says Ugg.

### The Following Morning

"That's a heavy rubbish bag Mum." says Ken.

"I know." says Ken's Mum, "I'm sure we could make it smaller, but I don't know how."

"Compost." shouts Heidi.

"What do you mean compost?" asks Mum.

"We had a compost man in school yesterday, he said we could reduce our rubbish by buying a compost bin, he said they were very easy to use and great for the garden."

"That reminds me, I did see something in the newspaper last week" says Mum. "Let me find that paper, it's in this rubbish bag somewhere".

After Ken and Heidi leave for school, Mum finds the advertisement in the newspaper.

"Five pounds with delivery, I'll phone them up right now." says Mum to herself.

"Compost bin delivery line how can I help you?" says the voice on the line.

"Could I order a five pound compost bin please?" says Mum.

"Certainly Madam, could I take your address please?"

So Mum gives her address and pays for the bin.

"That was easy and I didn't realise it got delivered to the door." says Mum out loud.

# A story for teachers to read

## Back at Home

A few days later Heidi and Ken come home from school and there's a big plastic cone on the doorstep.

"What's that Mum? Is it an alien?" asks Ken.

"No dummy, it's a compost bin." replies Heidi thumping her brother.

"Oh good." says Mum "It's arrived, lets take it straight through and put in the garden."

"Where should we put it?" asks Mum.

"The compost man said we should put it somewhere warm and sunny." replies Heidi.

"Perfect, it can go in the corner then. It's quite close to the house so we can get to it when it's raining but it's out of the way for when you're playing."

"I'm going to eat a banana so I can put the skin straight into the compost bin and watch it turn into compost." declares Heidi.

"Hang on." says Mum, "Look we've got an instruction booklet - we need to read that before we go filling the bin."

"OK I'll eat a banana while you read the instructions, then we can put it into the compost bin and watch it rot."

The three of them sit down at the kitchen table and read the five easy steps to making compost.

"I don't think the banana skin magically becomes compost by putting it in the bin" says Mum, "I think you need to wait for a few months before you get any useable compost."

The next day Heidi and Ken are playing in the new compost bin. Mr Turner from next door looks over the fence and says, "I see you've got your own compost bin, have you started using it?"

"Not yet." replies Ken. "We're filling the little box in the kitchen before putting it all in the bin."

"That's a good idea." says Mr Turner, "It saves you having to run down the garden every time you have some peelings. But don't forget that you also need to put in your garden waste – rake up all the leaves and grass cuttings and put them in the bin too!"

Two days later, Wonky and Ugg are sulking in a corner of the garden. "I know that the rubbish dump was scary, but

there's no food here at all – I'm starving!" says Ugg.

"Me too." agrees Wonky, "I'm losing so much weight and feeling so light, I might be swept away by a gust of wind!"

Then, suddenly, all the leaves around them blew towards them and Wonky and Ugg got swept up into the air and they both started shouting for help. "See, I told you it would happen!" panicked Wonky, "We'll be blown onto the road and squashed!"

But it wasn't the wind at all. It was Ken sweeping up some leaves to put into the compost bin with the full box of waste from the kitchen. He sees Wonky and Ugg and shows them to Heidi, who screams.

"Keep them away from me they're disgusting."

Heidi's scream has brought Mum back over to the children.

"What are you scaring your sister with?" she asks.

"Look, I've found a worm and a slug. Should I squash them or put them down Heidi's jumper?"

"No!" shouts Heidi.

"Enough." says Mum, "We won't squash them or put them down anyone's clothing. The best place for them would be in the compost bin."

"That's right." says Heidi calming down. "The compost man said worms and slugs were really good for compost as they eat their way through all of the food waste."

Ken walks over to the compost bin and drops Wonky and Ugg inside.

"Ouch that hurt." complains Wonky.

"I thought we'd had it." says Ugg, "I really thought something nasty was going to happen. Anyway, where are we now?" He asks taking in his new surroundings.

"Look, there's loads of food." says Wonky recovering from his state of shock. "I think we're in a compost bin."

"Fantastic!" replies Ugg "And we're the first here. Let's make the most of it and start munching before anyone else arrives."

"Definitely." replies Wonky, finding a yummy banana skin.

The two friends are delighted to have moved into their new home and start to work on the serious job of eating as much as they can.

*\*Written by David Smith (Home Compost Advisor for Wiltshire, Fareham and New Forest)*